



TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER®

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Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268-0001

RE: Docket No. RM2017-3

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of Tennessee Riverkeeper, our thousands of members and, most importantly, those we serve: over eight million residents in the Cumberland and Tennessee River watershed plus the countless others who visit our basin every year.

We rely on the U.S. Mail to raise funds and communicate with our supporters and constituents. Without the mail, our fundraising would suffer severely and, as a consequence, so would our mission. The vast majority of donations that we receive – and solicit – come through the mail.

We simply do not understand why suddenly there is a need to increase nonprofit marketing mail rates for the nominal benefit of commercial marketing mail. This would seem to fly in the face of the rationale of the law granting nonprofits a discounted rate.

As a practical matter, injecting unanticipated increases such as those proposed here by USPS will mean that our fundraising budget will not be able to keep pace with the increase in postage costs. The inevitable result will be a reduction in our use of the mail, a reduction in our revenues, and, in turn, a reduction in our ability to serve our beneficiaries.

If our postage rates were to increase, say, 5%, and produce a corresponding 5% loss of revenue, we would not be able to be as efficient or effective in our pollution patrols, water quality monitoring, or educational outreach. Respectfully, we ask you to consider this consequence.

Please do not change the current system for calculating nonprofit rates. Implemented by the Postal Service over ten years ago, we see no pressing need for a change, especially not one that will do harm to all nonprofits using the mail. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Whiteside, Executive Director

TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER®

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